

Ohrdruf -- Founded By A Saint With The Music Of Bach

Up in the [Thuringian](#) Mountains lies the town of Ohrdruf, a place founded more than eleven hundred years ago by none other than St. Boniface himself.

A lot about Ohrdruf has changed since Boniface's day, a lot of history had happened (including some unspeakable horrors), but today it's a place of serenity and the music of Bach.

Where to start about Ohrdruf? Well, let's get it over with in the beginning, shall we?

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Ohrdruf was once the site of a Concentration Camp (a sub-camp of Buchenwald) in the 1930s and '40s. Thousands of people died at the camp, with many more on death march before being liberated by Allied troops. It's believed that the Ohrdruf camp was the first of all the camps to be liberated.

The camp is long gone, replaced by a town that celebrates the beauty of music from Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach lived here for a while with his brother, and now every June Ohrdruf celebrates with its Bach Days.

I'm only too sorry to say that not much of Ohrdruf's original Church of St. Michael still exists. Only the tower is still around; and even that's been rebuilt, as it was destroyed by an airstrike. St. Michael is important to Ohrdruf, which is why you'll find its landmark is the statue known as *Eiserner Michael*, or Iron Michael.

A few more sites of Ohrdruf can be seen by taking a City Tour, which will bring you around to places like the very bright yellow *Siechhofskirche*, a church built in 1779. I'll take you to the Church of St.

Trinity (built 1709), to the Old Tannery, to see the original defense wall from the 16th century, and the Renaissance Schloss Ehrenstein.

It isn't all sightseeing, by any stretch of the imagination. Heck no, Ohrdruf appreciates a good party. Every May is the City Festival, followed by events like the Summer Festival (which is in September), and both Heritage Day and Christmas Market events at the castle.

The town is also great if you love the outdoors, whether it's skiing, fishing, hiking, or taking a leisure bicycle ride.

Maybe this is why St. Boniface fell in love with the area enough to stick around?